the beginning of the fifteenth century the nave had been completed and covered in, and the central octagonal part had been carried up to the drum, immediately over the large arches, and the three large chapels domed in.

At this point a new period in the construction and character of the work commences. We will, therefore, for a while, examine particularly the work as far as it had then proceeded.

The plan consists of the nave, flanked on each side by a side aisle.

	FEET.
Total length from the west door to the further end of the church, within the walls	491·6
Total length of nave from the entrance-door to the arch of the octagon	260·0
The width of the nave between the walls	53·5
The height of the nave from the pavement to the ceiling	137·7
The internal width between the aisle walls	128·0
The total width of transepts between the walls	154·0
The piers are square, and in diameter	10·0
The inter-columnar space between the piers	52·0

There are three doors at the west end, leading respectively into the nave and side aisles; and there are two on each of the north and south sides leading into the side aisles. We may remark, that the piers consist of a group of four pilasters: from the two facing east and west in each pier, large pointed arches spring; but above the pilaster facing the nave another pilaster rises, surmounted by an entablature of peculiar design, above which spring the arches or groined domes that form the ceiling of the nave, having very much the appearance of a Gothic roof. In fact, the whole character of this part of the interior of the church bears a Gothic impress, modified by a certain sentiment derived from the monuments of antique art, which were the great objects of study of the artists of those days.

A noble arch leads from the nave to the octagon, and small yet still noble apertures on the axes of the naves lead from them into the octagon, also peculiar—a feature which this cathedral has in common with our own Ely Cathedral and St. Paul's of London. I may, perhaps, be permitted to call attention to this arrangement, by which the vista in the side aisles is uninterrupted, and the view of the spectator in the side aisle is carried at once into that important portion of a church—the very centre of attraction—under the dome.

Arrived under the centre of this imposing feature, we find chapels to the right and left, forming, as it were, transepts, and to the east another similar apsidal end, forming the other arm of the cross. Each of these polygonal chapels contain five smaller radiating chapels, with an altar in each. Two of the piers of the octagon are hollowed, to form robing-rooms, and in the other two piers are staircases to ascend to the cupola. The high altar is placed immediately under the centre of the dome, surrounded by a very cumbersome and inelegant screen of formal architecture, designed by Baccio d'Agnolo, another painter-architect.

The effect of the interior is extremely sombre,—not the dim religious light of the poet, but a heavy monotonous gloom. There is great poverty in the decorations, and bareness in the appearance of the walls. There are very few windows, quite insufficient to give that play of light and shade which is the great charm of our Gothic cathedrals. There is, in fact, in the building a deadness and chilling effect.

We now pass to the exterior. The east end has never been completed, and although faced up to a certain height, in the same style as the sides, the casing was subsequently removed, and the façade underwent various modifications, to which we shall have occasion hereafter to refer.

On the elevation of the northern aisle there are, from the N.W. angle up to the second pillar of the nave, a series of slightly projecting piers, with a succession of small windows, with an intermediate doorway. The windows are narrow and lofty, divided into two lights by a central twisted column, surmounted by a Gothic arch, above which rises a gable head, or species of canopy. The whole composition of this feature is fanciful yet elegant, presenting in the leading and general mass a Gothic sentiment, yet in the detail a capricious and irregular combination, at variance with its own primary style; twisted columns are used instead of buttresses, and are surmounted by buttresses, above which are crocketed finials. Instead of deep recessed reveals we have flat faces, and in lieu of sunk panels byzantine forms, indicated by mosaic or inlaid marbles in parquetted patterns, for which the Florentines have been ever famous.

The door also presents the same details and features—by no means deficient in grace. On each side of the square aperture there are slender twisted columns, the bases of which rest on lions. A square vertical buttress surmounts the columns, and has on its top a small statue. A two-centre pointed arch rises above the lintel of the door, fringed on the inner edge, and having a group, in the centre, of the Madonna and child, with an angel on either side. A truncated gable end rises over the arch crocketed, and on the truncated apex of the pediment is a niche with twisted columns, arched head, buttresses, finials, and crockets.

The plain face of the wall is thus divided: there is a kind of podium or dado as high as the aperture of the door, and level with the bottom of the windows; from this to the cornice it is divided into four heights of panels, not sunk, not moulded, merely indicated by the patterns of various coloured marbles; and as there are similar marble panels in the podium, there are in all five rows of these flat panels in the height. Then comes a species of cornice, indicated rather by its continuous horizontal lines than by any bold or projecting mouldings, for the mouldings are few, small, and without any material advance from the face of the wall. There is then a kind of attic, which is surmounted by another species of cornice, the projection of which is produced by machicolations, consisting of trefoil arches resting on corbels, above which is an impanelled parapet. Behind this attic is a flat roof, above which rises the clerestory similarly panelled, and with a series of large circular 'bull's-eye windows.

The same style of ornamentation prevails throughout the exterior along the aisle walls, as also around the polygonal chapels which flank the octagonal centre, here somewhat varied by the flying buttresses which counterpoise the thrust of the smaller domes of the polygonal chapels, and which polygonal chapels act as abutments to the drum of the great dome.

Considerable contradiction exists as to the date of the death of Arnolfo. It appears that the ceremony of laying the first or corner stone by the Cardinal Legate took place in 1295; Milizia and Quatremère de Quincy state that our architect died in 1300; Sgrilli in 1330; and the latter seems the more probable date, as it is acknowledged by all that he carried up the walls to a considerable height ere he died, and that he turned three of the arches of the great cupola. So great an advance in so gigantic an edifice could not have been accomplished in so short a period as five or six years, and particularly when we consider its slow progress until the time when Brunelleschi took it in hand—about 1410, or 115 years after the laying of the stone.

Let us for a moment, then, consider the style of decoration adopted in the exterior of this cathedral. It would appear that the object of Arnolfo was to give great breadth of effect to his façade. To avoid the established practice of the introduction of storeys of columns, one above the other, of small dimensions, as we find at Pisa and in other parts of Italy: he has abandoned the playful effects produced by the protruding buttresses of Gothic buildings, of which, however, there are few examples on that side of the Alps, and of which he was doubtless ignorant; and he did not avail himself of the varied outline produced by vertical pinnacles, finials, or other upshooting members rising above the line of cornice. Casting off the trammels of the rules of the fantastic style hitherto prevalent, and unacquainted with the severe refinements of classic art, which did not come into vogue until a century after his decease, he yielded apparently to his own feelings alone, and has produced an enormous but a timid and flat development of surface, mechanical and tame, devoid of bold and striking sentiment, and with a total absence of those dignified and impressive modifications of outline, chiaroscuro, and advancing and receding planes, which form the charm as well of Gothic as of classic art.

On the death of Arnolfo, Giotto was appointed to continue the work, in which he seems to have followed most strictly the design of the original architect, not only in the cathedral, but also in the campanile or bell tower, which he erected near the S.W. angle of the cathedral. It is, of the kind, the most beautiful production of the art.

The cathedral seems to have advanced very slowly after the death of Arnolfo. The nave was covered in, and the exterior of the side walls completed, as also the octagon and the polygonal chapels branching from it both on the outside and inside, and the octagon had been carried up to the general line of cornice, but the west end only presented a bare wall, partly faced with marble by Arnolfo, as high as the doors. Here there was a pause, for it was discovered that no one evinced sufficient capacity to undertake the addition of a dome to cover the vast central octagon of the cross. Many were the strange and senseless projects submitted to the trustees of the fabric. Some proposed a central pillar, from which radiated arches should be turned; others recommended that the space should be filled with earth mixed with coin, up to the required height, and that upon this centre the cupola should be turned, which done the people should be admitted to remove the soil, their labour being recompensed by the coin they should find in the load carried away.

In the mean time there was one moved by the powerful incentive of a noble ambition for distinction. He was cherishing the thought, that for him was reserved the splendid task of completing in a worthy manner the cathedral of his native city, which should out-eclipse every preceding erection. Laborious, determined, and endowed with a mechanical genius, he gave himself up to this achievement. He went through the drudgery of the first principles of the art. He looked around in vain for monuments, the taste and skill of which should be worthy models upon which to create a new epoch. Rome was then the El-Dorado of art. Her temples, her thermæ, her amphitheatre, her columns and triumphal arches, opened a new field of delight and instruction. Year after year Filippo Brunelleschi drew, measured, and deeply studied them; and again and again returned to the absorbing occupation. Disregarding time, labour, nay, the very food which should keep body and soul together, he denied himself the amusements and almost the necessities of life, in order to return to his dear Florence a worthy citizen, an accomplished architect of the proud republic.

The problem was at length solved in his mind, and he prepared a model, which, however, he prudently kept from the sight of all.

In 1407 Brunelleschi, on his arrival at Florence, found all parties in confusion, disputing the proper steps to be taken to complete the dome of the cathedral. He was consulted on the subject, and, without communicating the principal portion of his conception, he advised the trustees to construct a drum 38 feet high, pierced with eight circular windows, to give light to this portion similar to those already in other parts of the fabric. This suggestion was adopted and carried into effect, and as his fellow-citizens seemed hardly to value his capacity, he left them once more for Rome, in 1419, to reconsider his project, and compare its practical details with the construction of the baths and other ruins of that city. The curators of the cathedral and the government again called a meeting of the scientific men of all Europe to receive their ideas upon this absorbing question, at which Brunelleschi attended. One person suggested one means, another another, and each seemed more preposterous than the other, more senseless and impracticable. Brunelleschi alone was calm, but, without showing his model, stated that his idea was to construct without centering a double dome, with free passage between the outer and inner one, to allow people to pass all round, between the two. He was scoffed and derided, and urged to explain it further. This he refused. He was then accused of trifling with the authorities and other distinguished men around him, upon which, to gain their confidence, he adopted, according to Milizia, an illustration of his argument, attributed to Columbus a century after. He produced an egg, and challenged them to make it stand upright. This they said was impossible. He then took it, broke the end, and placed it on the table. "Ah!" said they, "we all could have done that." "Yes," said he, "when I have shown you how to do it;

For more information on PDF Compression and OCR visit ThePaperlessOffice.org